

DHFC Guidelines Manual

SCDHEC DIVISION OF
HEALTH FACILITIES CONSTRUCTION

VERSION: MARCH 2013

LEGEND

IBC	ICC International Building Code
ICC	International Code Council, Inc.
IEBC	ICC International Existing Building Code
IFC	ICC International Fire Code
IMC	ICC International Mechanical Code
NFPA	National Fire Protection Association
SCDHEC	South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control
DHEC	Department of Health and Environmental Control
DHFC	Division of Health Facilities Construction
FLS	Fire and Life Safety
CON	Certificate of Need
LLR	Labor, Licensing and Regulation
DHL	Division of Health Licensing
NOC	Notice of Completion

DISCLAIMER

This manual is offered as a guide in interfacing with DHEC Division of Health Facilities Construction (DHFC). In the event a question should arise concerning the accuracy of any statements made herein, reference shall be made to the appropriate official document or DHFC Representative for final resolution without responsibility for the consequences of error vested upon SCDHEC.

The information in this manual is subject to change without notice. The intent of this manual is to be an electronic file in PDF format to be downloaded from our website, for assistance with DHFC's review process for Licensure. Please continually check our website and update your copy to confirm you have the most current version.

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**SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL
CONTROL DIVISION OF HEALTH FACILITIES CONSTRUCTION & OFFICE OF
FIRE AND LIFE SAFETY**

INTRODUCTION

The South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (S.C. DHEC) Division of Health Facilities Construction reviews plans, specifications, and construction for health care facilities which DHEC licenses in South Carolina. In addition, the Office of Fire & Life Safety conducts periodic fire and life safety surveys of existing facilities to insure continued compliance with appropriate codes, standards and regulations. This authority comes from the South Carolina Legislature. Some health care facility types, such as doctors' offices and clinics, are not licensed by S.C. DHEC and thus are not reviewed or inspected by us.

This manual is created and distributed to aid in the information, design, construction, and approval process for facilities licensed by DHEC. It is not intended as a design manual because it does not contain all that you will have to know or incorporate in your design and build process.

This manual is divided into many sections and some sections may not apply to the project on which you are working. We are a regulatory agency and have been charged with the responsibility of seeing that facilities built and operated in this state meet minimum regulation and code standards. We have found, however that most people want to "do it right the first time" and want help with the "rules". This manual is to assist you with the process and "the rules". We operate in a "consultation" mode and only "regulate" when we are forced to. Please feel free to call the DHFC office for clarifications and questions at (803) 545-4215.

Different divisions within DHEC review specific project disciplines. All facilities licensed by DHEC must have the plans and construction of the building or portion of the building approved by DHEC's Division of Health Facilities Construction and Health Licensing. The process consists of three stages: Plan approval, Construction approval, and Licensing approval.

The State of South Carolina is divided into DHFC Regions. Each region is assigned a professional team member dedicated to that region. You will work with the same team member(s) throughout the project, and may work with more than one team member together based on the project size. Often on inspections and in plan reviews, DHFC staff appreciate your patience as we respond to the high volume of emails and calls while we are mobile. Our e-mail addresses and phone numbers are located at:

DHFC REGIONS

<http://www.scdhec.gov/health/constr/regions.htm>

WHEN TO MAKE CONTACT WITH DHFC

Notification and Approval for Construction Work Performed in a DHEC Licensed Healthcare Facility:

Regulations promulgated by the Department of Health and Environmental Control contain standards on the construction and renovation of healthcare facilities. Many projects require notification and approval of the Division of Health Facilities Construction (DHFC) prior to work being performed. The purpose of this memorandum is to clarify which situations require approval from the Division of Health Facilities Construction (DHFC) before work is performed in a licensed facility. Our mission at Health Facilities Construction is to enable you as the customer to construct, repair and or make alterations for improvement of your licensed facility, while assuring that the work is in accordance with current accepted codes and standards.

When construction, renovation, or alteration is contemplated to existing licensed buildings, the facility must do all of the following:

- Determine whether or not the project is required to have approval from the DHFC. Projects that require notification to, and approval from, the DHFC include new construction or projects with changes to the physical plant of a licensed facility which has an effect on: the function, use or accessibility of an area; structural integrity; active and passive fire safety systems (including kitchen equipment such as exhaust hoods or equipment required to be under the said hood); door, wall and ceiling system assemblies; exit corridors; mechanical, electrical and plumbing systems; and projects pertaining to any life safety systems. Cost has no bearing on whether or not a review is needed. When in doubt, please contact the DHFC for guidance.
- Submit a Construction Project Information Form (CPIF), found at <http://www.scdhec.gov/health/constr/index.htm>.
- Contact DHFC regarding code and regulatory requirements that apply to the project.
- Submit plans and specifications to the division for review.

Construction work shall not begin until approval of the final drawings or written permission has been received from DFHC. Any construction deviations from the approved documents shall be approved by DFHC.

The DHFC does not require a review of general facility maintenance items, defined as “the act of keeping property or equipment in good condition by making repairs, correcting problems, etc.” If you are unclear if a project is considered maintenance or construction, please contact our office for guidance. The following examples of work are considered maintenance items and do not require approval from DHFC.

- a. Painting* - a CPIF is not required for this work, but the facility is required to comply with current building and NFPA codes for correct type and application of all the material.
- b. Window treatments* - a CPIF is not required for this work, but the facility is required to comply with current building and NFPA codes for correct type and application of all the material.
- c. Fixing leaks* - a CPIF is not required for this work, but the facility is required to comply with current building and NFPA codes for correct type and application of all the material. If the leak has damaged the facility due to mold growth, or any other reason, and requires any wall assembly replacement, please contact our office for direction.

*(The above projects are provided as examples of maintenance items and should not be construed as an all-inclusive list.)

If any type of work, maintenance or otherwise, is performed to a standard inconsistent with codes or regulations, the work will require repair and or complete replacement. In this instance, your facility may also be cited for failure to comply with the pertinent codes or regulations.

If you need clarification of this memorandum for any current or future projects at your facility, please do not hesitate to contact our office at (803) 545-4215. Additional information related to construction at healthcare facilities may be found at www.scdhec.gov/health/constr

TYPES OF FACILITIES LICENSED BY DHEC

DHFC reviews the following types of facilities. Reviews are performed only for facilities which are intended to be licensed by DHEC. These include but are not limited to:

- . General Hospitals
- . Specialized Hospitals
- . General Infirmaries
- . Nursing Homes
- . Intermediate Care Facility for the Intellectually Disabled
- . Ambulatory Surgical Facilities
- . Residential Treatment Facilities for Children and Adolescents
- . Community Residential Care Facilities
- . Adult Day Care Facilities
- . Outpatient/Inpatient Facilities for Chemically Dependent or Addicted Persons
- . Birthing Centers
- . Renal Dialysis Centers
- . Others

DHEC does not license doctor's offices or most outpatient clinics. We also do not review these facilities, even if owned by a licensed entity unless the clinic is part of the license of the entity. If you have a question, please contact us at (803) 545-4370 or (803) 545-4215.

LICENSING PROCESS OUTLINE

Briefly, the process of getting a facility or space licensed is as follows. These steps are discussed in more detail in following sections.

1. Obtaining a Certificate of Need, if required and/or fill out DHL Licensing application.
2. Assembling construction documents and project manual of your project/facility.
3. Review and Approval of your construction documents by DHFC.
4. Owner begins Construction, Alterations and/or Renovations.
5. Construction Progress Inspections by DHFC.
6. Final Construction Inspection by DHFC.
7. Documentation Required at the Final Construction Inspection.
8. Internal document "NOC" sent from DHFC to DHL.
9. Licensing Inspection by DHL.
10. Certification Inspection (if required for federal reimbursement, occurring several months after the facility is open.)

INSTRUCTIONS FOR DESIGN PROFESSIONALS

CERTIFICATE OF NEED

Many facilities must obtain a Certificate of Need (CON) before they can begin the project and ultimately be licensed. Hospitals, Nursing Homes, ICFID and Ambulatory Surgery Facilities are examples. Community Residential Care facilities do not require a Certificate of Need. Please visit <http://www.scdhec.gov/administration/regs/docs/61-15.pdf> for further guidance and feel free to call (803) 545-4200 with questions. If required, please ensure that the C.O.N. number or indication of exemption appears on all correspondence, including drawings.

Those facilities which do require a Certificate of Need for operation may require a C.O.N. or a C.O.N. Exemption Number for expansions, renovations, or introduction of new services. We cannot do plan reviews or issue a plan acceptance letter to those facilities without either a C.O.N. Number or an Exemption Number. If you are unsure if a CON is required, please call (803) 545-4200.

ACCEPTING PLANS FOR REVIEW

Plan and construction acceptance must be obtained from DHFC. The first step is to assemble the construction documents for an appointment in our office.

SC LLR and SCDHEC Regulations require that most facilities licensed by DHEC have plans prepared by an design professional registered in the State of South Carolina and that these documents "shall bear their signed, seal(s)". Institutional, Assembly, Hazardous, and Educational Facilities, are examples of occupancies that shall have a design professional. If you are not sure, call and we will guide you.

Plans for Community Residential Care Facilities which will house 6 or more residents shall be produced by a design professional. Construction documents for Community Residential Care Facilities of 5 or less residents shall be reviewed and professionally drawn to scale by a drafts person or designer, but are not required to be produced by an architect.

Construction documents produced by a designer or drafts person shall be professionally produced with skill and accuracy and shall meet the requirements as to content and detailing as directed by the DHFC plan reviewer.

CURRENT CODES, REGULATIONS AND STANDARDS

Regulations, Codes and Standards which the Division of Health Facilities Construction may use when reviewing projects. Note that not all apply for all types of facilities. If you have questions or need clarifications, please call (803) 545-4215.

IBC	2006
IEBC	2006
IFC	2006
IMC	2006
NFPA 10	2010
NFPA 13	2010
NFPA 13D	2010
NFPA 13R	2010
NFPA 70	2008
NFPA 72	2010
NFPA 99	2005
NFPA 101	2000

ALL SCDHEC and LLR REGULATIONS

GRANDFATHER CLAUSE FOR EXISTING BUILDINGS

All buildings, new and existing, being licensed for the first time or changing their license to provide a different service shall meet the current codes and regulations listed above. Any additions, alteration, or renovations to an existing licensed facility shall meet the codes, regulations, and requirements for the building and its essential equipment and systems as listed above.

Unless specifically required otherwise by DHFC, all existing facilities licensed by the DHL shall meet the construction codes and regulations for the building and its essential equipment and systems in effect at the time the plans were accepted. Buildings under construction at the time of the adoption of regulations shall meet the codes, regulations, and requirements in effect at the time of the plan final acceptance from DHFC.

Any facility that gives up or loses its license, or any number of licensed beds, and wants to be relicensed or “license increased” will be considered a “new” building and must meet the current codes, regulations, and standards for the building and its essential equipment and systems in effect at the time of application for relicensing or increase in the license.

PLAN APPROVAL BY DHFC

Construction work shall not commence until final plan approval is received by DHFC. All plan reviews performed by DHFC are done on an appointment only basis with the owner or owner's representative(s) and design professional present. The design professional must be present at all plan reviews. Plan reviews are done in 3 stages unless other arrangements are approved by DHFC plan reviewer. Schematic, design development and final documents are required for projects. The object of the reviews is to get a set of code compliant plans properly sealed, and with all required documentation. Final Construction documents must be properly signed, sealed and dated at the time of the final review.

The following documentation must also be submitted during the review process. The project or construction documents cannot be accepted without the documentation below:

1. Project Information Form. <http://www.scdhec.gov/administration/library/d-0275.doc>
2. Final Documentation Form – <http://www.scdhec.gov/health/constr/constreqdoc.doc>
3. Fire Department Letter indicating the local fire department has the equipment or arrangements to fight a fire in that type of facility. (Not required if a fire hydrant is within or will be within 400 feet from any portion of the building.)
4. Commercial kitchen plan with full equipment list and all equipment specification sheets.

Please Do Not Mail-in construction documents. "Mail-in" construction documents for review will not be addressed and will be recycled.

Plan reviews and acceptance by DHFC, include new construction or projects with changes to the physical plant of a licensed facility which has an effect on: the function, use or accessibility of an area; structural integrity; active and passive fire safety systems (including kitchen equipment; such as exhaust hoods or equipment required to be under the said hood); door, wall and ceiling system assemblies; exit corridors; mechanical, electrical and plumbing systems; and projects pertaining to any life safety systems. Cost has no bearing on whether or not a review is needed.

Due to the high demand of this office, it is suggested that appointments be made as soon as the expected review date is determined. It is easier to postpone an appointment than to try to work around previously scheduled dates.

All subsequent addenda, change orders, field orders, and documents altering the DHFC approval, must be submitted. Any substantial deviation from the accepted documents shall require written notification, review and re-approval from DHFC.

When you come for your plan review, bring **One (1) full size complete set** of construction documents and addenda (if applicable) for review by DHFC.

If the project is delayed for a period of twelve months from the time of acceptance of final documents, a new evaluation and/or approval is required by DHFC.

Letters shall be written from our office accepting the documents or construction documents. In an effort to expedite the plan acceptance process, acceptance of documents or construction documents allowing work to begin in any licensed facility may also come in the form of a verbal, phone text, or email format. In any case, the following statement below shall apply whether stated or not in any project acceptance communication:

“This examination of the submitted documents does not relieve the owner, architect/engineer, and contractor, or their representatives from individual or collective responsibility to comply with the applicable codes and regulations. This review is not to be construed as a check of every item in the submitted documents and does not prevent authorities from hereafter requiring corrections of errors in plans or construction.

Please keep this office informed as to any developments (i.e. addendums, change orders, etc.) on the referenced project. Please keep this office informed in writing of the start of construction and progress of construction (at each 10% completion point). Inspections are required for this project. Please contact DHFC for additional information on inspections”.

For our records, after final plan review, a compact disk in a hard case, with the following information shall be required prior to project acceptance:

1. 1 PDF file per drawing sheet, stamped and signed.
2. PDF file of the CON/Exemption letter.
3. 1 PDF file per specification section, including cover, TOC, and all other information in the Project Manual.
4. PDF file of the Licensing Application.
5. If applicable, PDF files of water, sewer, OCRM and zoning approvals.
6. PDF file of the LLR SFM Sprinkler Specification Sheet.
7. PDF file of the Construction Project Information Form
8. Provide business card inside the hard CD case.
9. Identify the Project on the outside of the CD.
10. Other material as requested.

DESIGN NOTES FOR DESIGN PROFESSIONALS

CONSTRUCTION PROJECT INFORMATION FORM

When submitting drawings for the first review or prior to the review, please submit the following project information form filled out with applicable information:

<http://www.scdhec.gov/administration/library/d-0275.doc>

FORMAT FOR PLANS SUBMITTED FOR REVIEW

Plan reviews need to address the following items, as a minimum requirement, but shall not be limited to the following:

1. Schematic Plans
 - (a) Program
 1. List services to be provided in the proposed construction.
 2. A schedule showing total number of beds (existing and new); types of bedrooms (private, semi-private, etc.) and types of ancillary spaces.
 - (b) Schematic Plans
 1. Single line drawings of each floor shall show the relationship of the various activities or services to each other and the room arrangement in each. The name of each room shall be noted. The proposed roads and walks, service and entrance courts, parking, and orientation, may be shown on either a small plot plan or the first floor plan. Indicate type of building construction as defined in NFPA and IBC, and provide a schematic Life Safety Plan.
 2. If the project is an addition, or is otherwise related to existing buildings on the site, the plans shall show the facilities and general arrangement of those buildings, their present configuration with existing fire rated and non-rated walls, and building construction types. This usually appears on the Life Safety Plan.
2. Design Development. Design Development plans shall include the following, as a minimum, but shall not be limited to:
 - (a) Civil engineering plans - show existing grade structure and proposed improvements. Provide a vicinity map and building locator guide.
 - (b) Architectural Plans - provide floor plans (1/8" scale preferred). Show door swings, windows, casework and millwork, fixed equipment and plumbing fixtures. Indicate function of each space. Provide large scale plans of typical new bedrooms with a tabulation of net square footage of each bedroom. Provide typical large scale wall interior and exterior sections and exterior wall elevations.
 - (c) Life Safety Plan - single sheet floor plan showing fire and smoke compartments, all means of egress and all exit markings. Dimension smoke compartments, calculate areas of smoke compartments and draft stop compartments (if any); and calculate and tabulate exit units required.

- (d) Mechanical Engineering Plans - provide one line diagram of the ventilating system with relative pressures of each space. Provide at least in outline form, system operation and description or drawings of any anticipated emergency smoke control system correlated with item (c) above
- (e) Electrical Engineering Drawings - one line diagram of (essential) normal and alternate power system showing service entrance(s), switchboards, transfer switches, distribution and panel boards, and description of loads. Show fire alarm zones, correlated with item (c).
- (f) Outline specifications - A general description of the construction, including construction classification and rating of components, U.L. assemblies, interior finishes, general types and locations of acoustical material, floor coverings, hardware groups, electrical equipment, ventilating equipment, and plumbing fixtures.
- (g) Whenever an addition, alteration, renovation or remodeling to an existing facility is proposed, the general layout of spaces of the existing facility shall be submitted with the Design Development plans.
- (h) Show existing sprinklered areas.

3. Construction Documents.

- (a) The construction documents shall be an extension of the Design Development plan submittal and shall completely describe the construction contemplated. These documents shall consist of work related to civil engineering, architectural, structural engineering, mechanical engineering, electrical engineering plus specifications for the complete description of all disciplines.
- (b) It will take less time for this office to perform final review if the following things are accomplished before submitting the final construction documents:
 - (1) Prepare everything in a neat, correctly ordered packet.
 - (2) Sign and seal final construction documents.
- (c) Submit a Fire/Life Safety Plan drawn to an appropriate scale to include the whole building "footprint" indicating the following:
 - (1) Fire and smoke compartments, indicating the length, width and square footage of each compartment.
 - (2) All means of egress and exit markings, and exit exterior lighting.

- (3) Calculation of exit units, number required and number provided.
- (4) Indications of the sprinklered areas.
- (5) Location of all fire extinguishers, color coded in green marker on the print submitted.
- (6) Color code all rated walls, and smoke barriers.
- (7) Provide a listing of the following in a "chart" format: See Chart on page 14.
 - C.O.N. number and date
 - Type of Occupancy as defined in the IBC. (Business, Residential, Institutional, etc)
 - Type of Construction as defined in the IBC and NFPA 220. (ex. Type VA, 1 hr. protected, sprinklered)
 - Maximum allowable gross square footage of the building and the actual gross square footage.
 - Required ratings of load bearing walls, floors, structural supports, etc. according to Table 601 of the IBC.
 - Seismic Zone – Site Class
 - Fire Sprinkler requirements, if any
 - Height and Number of stories
 - Land Use Zone (Wetlands, etc)
 - Total amount of required storage space.
 - A listing of the applicable codes used in the project design according to jurisdiction.
- (d) Check your floor plans to insure that they agree with the Life Safety Plan as to the location of fire rated walls, smoke partitions, horizontal exits, etc.
- (e) Check your mechanical and electrical drawings to insure that they agree with the Life Safety Plan as to location of fire rated walls, smoke partitions, horizontal exits, etc. This is to insure that engineering functions which penetrate or otherwise relate to rated partitions do so according to code requirements.
- (f) Provide a hardware, door, window, and finish schedules.
- (g) Indicate on mechanical, plumbing and electrical plan sheets the names of all rooms as well as the room numbers.

CODE SUMMERY INFORMATION

The following information is a SAMPLING of code information to be listed on the Cover Sheet or on the Life Safety Plan of all projects.

CODE REVIEW INFORMATION

Name of Project
CON Number

BUILDING CONSTRUCTION TYPE

Type of Construction: (IBC)(NFPA)
Occupancy:

BUILDING AREA CALCULATIONS

Maximum allowable Square Feet:
Actual Square Feet:
Area Increase Calculations:
Maximum Allowable Stories
Actual Stories

APPLICABLE CODES

International Building Code
International Plumbing Code
International Mechanical Code
International Gas Code
International Fire Prevention Code
National Electric Code - NFPA 70
Life Safety Code - NFPA 101
DHEC Regulation 61-XXX
ANSI 117.1 Accessible and Usable Buildings
and Facilities Americans with Disabilities Act

FIRE RESISTANCE RATINGS

Party/Firewalls
Exterior Bearing Walls
Exterior Non-Bearing Walls
Interior Bearing Walls
Interior Non-Bearing Walls
Exit Access Corridors
Floor, Floor/Ceiling
Beams, Girders, Trusses, Columns
Roof, Roof/Ceilings
Vertical Shafts
Chases - P.M.E
Mixed Occupancy & Tenant Separation

LIFE SAFETY SYSTEMS

Emergency Power
Fire alarm System
Smoke Detectors
Smoke Detectors in Sleeping Rooms
Sprinkler System
Standpipe System
Draftstopping
Smoke Barriers

EXIT REQUIREMENTS

Dead End Limit
Panic Hardware
Locked Exit or Cross-corridor Doors
Maximum Travel Distance to Exit
Number of Exits Provided
Total Square Footage of floor divided by
gross S.F. per occupancy=Total maximum
number people per floor.
Number of Doors required

LAND USE INFORMATION

Wetland
Seismic Design Criteria
Wind Load Criteria
Wastewater Retention

CHECKLISTS & REGULATIONS

The following checklists and regulations are to aid in the process of plan review and construction. DHEC DHFC makes no claim that these checklists are complete or cover all that will be checked. If they are used carefully, they will aid you as intended.
<http://www.scdhec.gov/health/constr/checklist.htm>

CONSTRUCTION INSPECTIONS GENERAL INFORMATION

Construction shall not begin before the plan review process is completed. Substantial fines or penalties may be imposed if any construction work is done prior to the DHFC review process, and construction permit approvals.

Construction work which violates codes or standards will be required to be fixed and or removed. All projects shall obtain all permits from the local municipality. Work without proper permitting shall not be inspected by DHFC.

At least three site construction progress visits are required, progress inspection (50%), above ceiling inspection(s), and final inspection(s)) shall be arranged with DHFC staff by the Design Professional. Progress inspections will be made as often as desired (if scheduling is not an issue) by request of the Design Professional.

Although we can often accommodate same week, please allow a two week notice for any inspection. It is far to the advantage of all concerned that sufficient inspections be made. The Design Professional shall be present at all inspections. It shall be the responsibility of all Design Professionals to confirm that areas requiring inspection are ready for a DHFC inspection. Failed inspections may result in DHFC taking action against all Design Professionals involved.

The Design Professional or General Contractor shall take notes of each inspection. These inspection notes shall be retained for record documents and formatted as directed by DHFC in a "punch list" sign/counter sign format for completion.

FINAL CONSTRUCTION INSPECTION

At the final inspection, DHFC will check all items and exercise all of the systems. The DHFC final inspection is not to be used as a substitute for the Design Professional / General Contractor "punch list". If at the final inspection it is obvious that this has happened, the final inspection will be terminated.

A final inspection is only to be requested by the design professional. On our arrival, the building shall be **finished**, including the "owner installed" items. The building is to be clean, and ready to occupy by the Owner.

Upon satisfactory completion of the construction inspection, a “Notice of Completion” (NOC) document will be issued to DHL indicating that the project construction is accepted as ready for occupancy. The DHL will contact the Owner to arrange for a visit by the DHL prior to patient/client occupancy. Licensing will not visit until the DHFC has indicated acceptance of construction.

There is a list of documentation that is required at the final inspection and before close-out of the project. The project will not be approved without this required documentation furnished. To aid in compiling the required documentation, a checklist is furnished. On this form, put the dates of the letters of certification. The letters of certification must indicate that the systems “have been tested and found to be operating satisfactorily” It is not acceptable that they just say that the systems have been installed according to code. In the notebook furnished to DHFC at the final inspection, the certifications should be “copies”. The originals go to the Owner.

The required documentation for the certification notebook are found on this form:

<http://www.scdhec.gov/health/constr/constreqdoc.doc>

Other documentation which must be submitted for or furnished if regulations require:

Documentation on approvals of shielding and other requirements applicable to radiology departments or x-ray rooms, if applicable. These requirements are those of the Bureau of Radiological Health South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control.

Documentation from the Bureau of Air Quality Control, South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control if project involves their requirements.

Documentation of approval of the Division of Water Supply, South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control on applicable requirements for permits and approvals.

Documentation of approval of the Division of Domestic Wastewater, South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control on applicable requirements for permits and approvals.

LICENSING INSPECTION GENERAL INFORMATION

The Division of Health Licensing (DHL) will schedule their inspection until they have coordinated with the Owner and the DHFC has sent in the NOC to DHL indicating that the project is complete. When DHL makes their inspection, if all is acceptable, the building or area can be occupied and placed into service immediately. DHFC has limited authority to grant permission to occupy an area or building. If the area or building is occupied by the Owner before approval from licensing, significant action and fines may be imposed.

EXEMPTION TO LICENSING STANDARD

The following application is a form that can be filled out requesting an exemption to any statement made in our Regulations. We cannot grant exceptions to code requirements. The form is mailed to DHL with all supporting documentation that you may want to attach to support your request. A review of your request will be made and a response in writing is usually sent within 30 days. The reviews are not open to the public and you do not have to make any presentation. <http://www.scdhec.gov/administration/library/D-0226.doc>

YOUR COMMENTS FOR THE DIVISION OF HEALTH FACILITIES CONSTRUCTION

You can send written comments to:

**Division of Health Facilities Construction
2600 Bull St.
Columbia, SC 29201**



Or reach us by phone at (803) 545-4215 OR (803) 545-4370 .

HOW TO FIND US

Our Offices are Located:
1777 Saint Julian Place, Columbia, SC

OFFICE OF FIRE AND LIFE SAFETY

The Office of Fire and Life Safety, an office of the Division of Health Facilities Construction, conducts periodic fire and life safety surveys of existing facilities to insure continued compliance with appropriate codes, standards and regulations. The authority to do this comes from the South Carolina Legislature. Some health care facility types such as doctor's offices and clinics are not licensed by SCDHEC and are not reviewed or inspected by us. If you have a question, please call us at (803) 545-4215.

Every year facilities experience a growing number of fire related emergencies. There are many causes for the fires; however, most are due to a lack of knowledge about fire safety and prevention. It is our mission through oversight, inspection, and education to help reduce these emergencies and prevent the loss of life and property at healthcare facilities.

The Office of Fire and Life Safety has regulatory responsibility to ensure compliance with state fire safety regulations and, in conjunction with the Division of Health Facilities Construction, acts as a liaison between local municipal fire departments, the South Carolina Office of State Fire Marshal and the facilities. We support regular interaction with these groups to discuss fire and life safety matters, as well as develop and conduct training programs.

FIRE AND LIFE SAFETY - CONTACTS

<http://www.scdhec.gov/health/constr/fire-life-safety-contacts.htm>

FIRE WATCH

It is required by International Fire Code to notify DHFC fire officials, and local fire officials, anytime fire detection, alarm and extinguishing systems are in an non-operative condition:

901.7 Systems out of service. Where a required fire protection system is out of service, the fire department and the fire code official shall be notified immediately and, where required by the fire code official, the building shall either be evacuated or an approved fire watch shall be provided for all occupants left unprotected by the shut down until the fire protection system has been returned to service.

Where utilized, fire watches shall be provided with at least one approved means for notification of the fire department and their only duty shall be to perform constant patrols of the protected premises and keep watch for fires.

firewatch@dhec.sc.gov

(803) 545-4215 Office
(803) 545-4212 fax

REPORT A FIRE

DHFC shall be notified immediately via telephone after calling 911 at (803)-920-3153 (emergency number), or by email, firewatch@dhec.sc.gov regarding any fire in the facility and followed by a complete written report to include fire department reports if any, to be submitted within a time frame not to exceed 72 hours from the occurrence of the fire.

FIRE AND LIFE SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS DURING CONSTRUCTION/RENOVATION

Demolition and renovation of areas within an existing facility must be carried out in a manner which considers all the factors affecting patient, staff and public safety; and does not present hazardous conditions to the patients.

Patient safety during construction within a facility is the responsibility of the facility. It may be necessary that building wings, beds or even certain areas of the facility be temporarily closed to patients and staff until such time that the area can be used under safe conditions. During renovations, a higher than normal degree of awareness of fire and safety hazards must be maintained by the facility staff and construction personnel. Temporary adjustments must be made in the fire evacuation plans and housekeeping procedures until the facility is restored to a condition of normalcy (i.e. all life and safety systems and safeguards are operational or complete.). Close coordination with all fire officials is necessary prior to and during renovations in order to receive their professional safety input and to satisfy particular requirements they may need to impose for patient and building safety.

Fire and Life Safety Systems which may require temporary shut-downs shall remain in a "down" condition for as short a time as possible. Prior to temporary shut-down of fire alarm, smoke detection, and sprinkler systems, coordinate with this Office and all local fire officials. These temporary shutdowns of life safety systems must be as brief as possible. Alternate safety provisions must be considered during the shutdowns such as a fire watch.

During construction, occupied portions of the facility must be kept neat and clean. The facility staff and construction personnel shall insure that dust and construction debris is not distributed through the portions of the health care facility remaining in operation. Areas under renovation are recommended to be sealed off from portions of the facility in use with appropriate noncombustible materials. Seal off corridors, ductwork and other areas where dust may penetrate. The integrity of 1 hour rated smoke barriers / partitions in occupied areas must be maintained. Provide additional fire extinguishers as may be required throughout the area under renovation, but specifically in areas where hazardous activities are undertaken such as welding.

Provide negative pressure machines to ensure the renovated space is not contaminating the occupied surrounded areas. All negative pressure machines shall be vented to the exterior.

Appropriate egress as required by codes is to be provided during the renovation process. Exits

must be marked and maintained in a clear and unobstructed manner to a safe point outside the building. Temporary exit signs may be necessary.

In essence, renovation phases must be planned to promote fire and life safety during this time of "higher than normal" hazard to the occupants.

FAQ

FAQ – Frequently Asked Questions - Below are general issues, problem, suggestions and clarifications on a series of topics that we have encountered in the past.

Subject Information

CRCF- Fire Drill	An unannounced fire drill shall be conducted at least quarterly for all shifts. Each staff member/volunteer shall participate in a fire drill at least once each year. Records of drills shall be maintained at the facility, indicating the date, time, shift, description, and evaluation of the drill, and the names of staff members/volunteers and residents directly involved in responding to the drill. 61-84-1504-A
CRCF- Fire Extinguishers	Fire extinguishers shall be sized, located, installed, and maintained in accordance with NFPA No. 10, except that portable fire extinguishers intended for use in resident sleeping areas shall be of the 2-A, 2-1/2 gallon, stored-pressure water type. 61-84-2201-A
CRCF- Doors	All resident room doors shall be solid-core; facilities licensed for six beds or more shall have 20-minute doors with closures. 61-84-2705-J.
ESRD-air gap	An air gap is required at dialysis equipment for the drain line. The air gap between the indirect waste pipe and the flood level rim of the waste receptor shall be a minimum of twice the effective opening of the indirect waste pipe. IPC 802.2.1
Can I do the work myself?	Not generally. Permits are required from the local authority for all work. All work shall be performed by licensed contractors. Quality of work shall be in accordance with all industry standards.
Do I need a permit?	Yes. The local building official shall be consulted for all work to occur in a DHEC licensed facility. All work shall be performed by licensed contractors.
Asbestos?	All DHEC licensed facilities shall have on file, and up to date, a building asbestos report produced by a company licensed in SC for inspection and asbestos testing.
Do I need to sprinkle my 5 bed CRCF	No. DHEC does not require a sprinkler system for a 5 bed CRCF. However, you must contact the local building official to see if they will want the building sprinklered.
Can I sprinkle a small portion of the building?	No. IBC, IFC and NFPA codes require the total building to be sprinklered.